

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted responsive to the Official Office Action mailed on November 26, 2003, in which claims 1-2 and 7-9 were finally rejected, and Claims 10 - 17 were allowed.

Claims 1-2 and 7-9 were rejected as anticipated under 35 USC § 102(3) by Good et al. The patent to Good et al. was cited for disclosure of a connecting device for connecting a connector by mating to an electronic card 52, the device comprising a card support 116 with locating pins 124, a frame 54, a movable member 50 carrying a spring 106 and an engaging member 94, said movable member further comprising a clamp 88, 72 and an actuation assembly 78, 74, 72.

Claim 1 includes language that modifies and specifies the relation of various elements in the claim. These modifying phrases have been ignored by Examiner and accorded no weight in the reading of the claim. The modifying phrases have been included to define the relation of a claim element to another claim element, which is not found in the reference.

One reference to a modifying phrase is "... fixedly disposed relative to said electronic circuit card support;" which modifies the claim element "a frame."

The frame identified in the Official Office Action is frame 54 and is not "... fixedly disposed relative to said electronic circuit card support."

The electronic circuit card support is designated as 116. The frame of the device in Good et al. is a member 54 which is movable with respect to the electronic circuit card support 116, pushed into engagement and pulled from engagement with electronic circuit card support 116, and must be movable to perform the function it is designed to do, that of supporting the circuit card and the engagement latch 78, 74, 72 relative to the circuit card 52, not the electronic circuit card support 116.

In the Examiner's response to arguments, Examiner has designated the card support as element 116 in Good et al. The electronic circuit card support 116 is fixed. The frame 54 of Good et al. is clearly movable and positionable with the connectors engaged and further disengageable. The device of Good et al. must provide for the insertion and the removal of the circuit board and the engagement and disengagement of the connectors. Thus the frame is not fixedly disposed as claimed.

The language of the claim, "a frame fixedly disposed relative to said electronic circuit card support; is clearly not met by the Good et al. reference.

A second example or instance of the language of the claim being disregarded when the Good et al. reference is applied to the claim by the Examiner is the phrase "... biased by said spring toward said electronic circuit card support"

The spring of the reference, Good et al., is a coiled torsion spring 106 incorporated into the latch mechanism and acting against the bracket 72 and the lever 78 to urge the lever in an upward counterclockwise direction. The torsion coil spring provides a natural bias to the lever which keeps the lever in an unlatched, raised position with the end of the latch withdrawn and disengaged from the flange 82 so that the entire assembly may be inserted and aligned prior to insertion of the pins 90 into the sockets 64. The only bias of the lever 78 toward the electronic circuit card support 116 results from the operator engaging the lever and pushing it down into the position illustrated in Fig. 2 of Good et al. The natural tendency of the spring is to prevent the movement of the lever to the position in Good et al. and the latch member 88 acting against the latching surface 100 maintains the latch in the latched position.

Further in the Examiner's response to arguments, Examiner has stated that Good et al. shows a spring located around the pin or axle 74 that biases the engaging member upward and counterclockwise. This is in the opposite direction from being biased toward the card support, whether it be the frame 54 or the support 116.

A third instance of the claim language being ignored by the Examiner when applying the reference Good et al. to the claims of the application is found in Claim 9. Claim 9 includes "... said spring exerts force through said engaging member on said electronic circuit card in excess of any force exerted on said connector by said connecting device to disconnect said connector"

A thorough reading and an understanding of the mechanics of the Good et al. device does not find any "... spring that exerts force ... in excess of any force exerted on said connector by said connecting device to disconnect said connector"

The spring 106 acting on the lever 78 provides a small force on the lever 78 to keep the lever latched and when unlatched, to rotate the lever counter-clockwise. The spring does not have nor does it exert a force large enough to disengage the connectors 64 from the pins 90. This is evident due to the lever having to engage the surface 82 to cause the connector 58 and the pins 90 of connector 118 to be separated by the counter-clockwise movement of the lever 78

Clearly and unarguably the claims 1 and 9 are clearly not met by the application of the disclosure and teaching of Good et al. when the language of the claim is given its normal and reasonable meaning. The phrases identified in the three instances above are included in the claim to provide the relationship of various elements of the claim and to define the invention.

Examiner is specifically requested to review the phrases quoted from claims 1 and 9 and to either (a) afford them their normal and reasonable meaning, or (b) explain in detail the basis for ignoring the phrases when applying the teaching of a reference.

If option (a) is performed, then the claims are allowable over the Good et al. patent because the claims are not met by the Good et al. reference and the rejection of claims 1-9 must fall due to the failure of the Good et al. patent to teach the claimed invention.

If option (b) is elected, the explanation requested is necessary and essential for the basis of an appeal of Examiner's refusing to allow claims 1-9 of the application.

With respect to claim 8, Examiner's position that Good et al. discloses the engaging member having a surface (at 94) for engagement with a surface of the card 52 and forcing the card toward the support 116 is not correct.

The surface 94 of member is not engaged with any electronic circuit card. The frame surrounding the circuit card is a support for the card. The frame comprises a member 60 which is a tailstock. The forcing of the tailstock 60 of Good et al. to in turn force the circuit card 52 toward the connector 118 is accomplished without the engagement of the member 94 with the tailstock 60.

The amendments made to the claims in this amendment were made for the purpose of clarifying the claim language and for the purpose of providing proper antecedent basis for the terms of the claims. No amendment was made to limit the scope of the claims or to overcome the references.

Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Good et al. in view of Kaiser et al. Claim 1 being allowable, all dependent claims are similarly allowable. Accordingly, with claim 1 being allowable, claims 3 and 4 are allowable as being dependent from an allowable claim.

Applicants note the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 5 and 6. It appears that claims 3 and 4 being allowable as depending from allowable claims 1 and 2, claims 5 and 6 would be similarly allowable. Accordingly, the need to present claims 5 and 6 in independent form appears to be unnecessary and not required at this point.

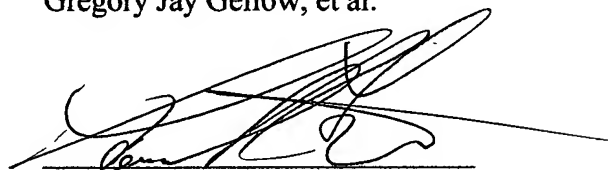
Applicants request entry of this amendment after final rejection because it either (a) places the application in condition for allowance, or (b) reduces the issues on appeal.

Applicants' Attorney believes that the amendments made herein clarify the claims and provide clear antecedent basis for all claim terms.

Applicants' Attorney respectfully requests entry of the amendment, re-examination and reconsideration. Applicants respectfully request that Examiner find the application allowable and issue a Notice of Allowance.

Should Examiner find any remaining minor questions or issues in the application, Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' Attorney at the telephone number listed below to resolve any outstanding minor issues.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
Gregory Jay Geilow, et al.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurence R. Letson', is written over a horizontal line.

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